



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
LANSING



March 8, 2004
RESUBMITTED: April 12, 2004

Memorandum to the Natural Resources Commission:

SUBJECT: Quality Deer Management Regulations

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, authorizes the Director and the Commission to issue orders to manage animals in this state.

Discussion and Background:

Quality Deer Management (QDM) has become a growing issue within the deer hunting community. In 1999, the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) asked the Wildlife Division to establish a procedure for private citizens to propose mandatory QDM areas within the state. Deer Management Unit (DMU) 118 (at that time, DMU 107) was the first area in Michigan to have mandatory antler point restrictions of at least three antler points on a side for harvesting a buck.

The procedure adopted by the NRC in 1999 established a five-year period for mandatory regulations, with a survey of hunters and landowners in the affected area following the fourth year. The procedure also established an evaluation of available data following the fifth year. Available data from DMU 118 is being evaluated to assess mandatory QDM regulations. Preliminary data analyses are inconclusive in determining results from the QDM regulations.

A survey was sent to 3,902 randomly selected hunters and landowners from DMU 118. A total of 2,892 questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 74 percent. Approximately 57 percent of the returned questionnaires supported continuation of the antler point restrictions. The QDM procedure establishes a level of support of 66 percent from those surveyed for mandatory QDM regulations to continue beyond the experimental five-year period.

The preliminary assessment of the available data and support from surveyed landowners and hunters are insufficient to recommend continuation mandatory QDM regulations in DMU 118. The Department recommends the elimination of the mandatory QDM regulations in DMU 118 and incorporating that DMU into DMU 018. The Department supports the voluntary implementation of QDM practices on private land.

Recommendation:

This order was submitted for information only at the April 2004 meeting of the Natural Resources Commission. This item appeared in the April 26, 2004, Calendar and is eligible for approval on May 7, 2004. We are now recommending that it be acted upon at this meeting.

Rebecca A. Humphries, Chief
Wildlife Division

Alan Marble, Acting Chief
Law Enforcement Division

George E. Burgoyne, Jr.
Resource Management Deputy

I have analyzed and discussed these recommendations with staff and concur as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

K. L. Cool
Director

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER

Amendment No. 5 of 2004

Under the authority of sections 40107 and 40113a, Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, as amended, being sections 324.40107 and 324.40113a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, the Natural Resources Commission and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources ordered that effective May 8, 2004, the following sections of the Wildlife Conservation Order shall read as follows:

3.101d Deer hunting in deer management units 045, 122, 152, 155, and 252 antler restriction.

Sec. 3.101d. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this order, in deer management units 045, 122, 152, 155, and 252, a person shall not take an antlered deer unless the deer has at least 1 antler with 3 or more antler points each 1 or more inches in length.

12.18 "Deer management unit 018 (Clare county)" defined.

Sec. 12.18. "Deer management unit 018 (Clare county)" means all of Clare county.

12.18a Repealed.

Issued this 7th day of May, 2004.

Approved as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

Keith J. Charters, Chairman
Natural Resources Commission

Approved as to matters over which the Director has authority.

K. L. Cool
Director